device **210** for execution thereof. The request **225** and **230** may be any transferable information that is received by the processing unit **205**.

[0040] By way of example only, the request **225** may be an indication from the application **215**. The indication from the application **215** may be retrieved upon monitoring operations performed by the application **215** and identifying one or more operations that are associated with a predefined configuration **260** of the user-input element **110**. In one instance, the data store **220** may be interrogated with data related to the operations to determine whether the predefined configuration **260** corresponds thereto. Upon retrieving the predefined configuration **260**, the configuration settings **250** may be drawn therefrom. In one embodiment, if the application **215** is an instant-messaging program, operations monitored by the processing unit **205** may indicate that the application **215** will enter a text-entry mode. Subsequently, the data store **220** is searched for an appropriate predefined configuration **260** that supports the text-entry mode. Accordingly, in this embodiment, the configuration settings **250**, which may be a command to the electromechanical device **210** to adjust the user-input elements **110** to replicate a physically-extending keypad, are extracted from characteristics of the appropriate predefined configuration **260**. In a variation of this example, the replication of the physically-extending keypad may be an alphanumeric.

[0041] In a second example, the request **230** may be a user-initiated actuation **275** from a user, entered at the flexible touchpad **115**, to dial a phone number or to create an email message. In this example, the flexible touchpad **115** may be a resistive touchscreen and entering the request **230** may be an actuation at the resistive touchscreen by a user's finger or stylus. Accordingly, the configuration settings **250** may be a command to the electromechanical device **210** to adjust the user-input elements **110** to express a dial pad or a keyboard, respectively.

[0042] In a third example, the request may be created upon receiving an indication of actuation **235** from the user-input elements **110** in the active condition. In one particular instance, a user-initiated input via one or more of the set of moveable pins, which comprise the user-input elements, is detected. This detected input is identified as being associated with a predefined configuration **260** of the user-input elements **110**. If the predefined configuration **260** is distinct from the present configuration of the user-input elements **110**, configuration settings **250** are generated. Accordingly, in this example, the configuration settings **250** may be derived from the indication of actuation **235** (e.g., typing on the physically-extending keypad), or characteristics of the predefined configuration **260**, and provided to the electromechanical device **210** to adjust the physical state and/or mode of the user-input elements **110**.

[0043] Upon receiving the request **225** or **230**, or request based on the indication of actuation **235**, the processing unit **205** may process the request to determine configuration settings **250**, as discussed above. In one instance, processing the request **225**, **230**, or **235** includes determining whether manipulating the positional state or mode (e.g., physically-extending keypad) of the user-input elements **110** is appropriate to address the request **225**, **230**, or **235**. By way of example, the request **225**, **230**, or **235** may be an indication to enter text, dialing a number, entering an application (e.g., application **215**) that uses a similar configuration of the user-input elements **110** as is presently employed, or any other input that does not trigger an adjustment to the positional state or mode of the user-input elements **110**. Alternatively, the request **225**, **230**, or **235** may be an indication to launch a new application that corresponds to an input interface that is not presently configured on the flexible touchpad **115**. In this example, the processing unit **205** will provide an indication, in the form of configuration settings **250**, to the electromechanical device **210** to manipulate the user-input elements **110**. It should be appreciated and understood that the configuration settings **250** may be derived from the request **225**, **230**, or **235** itself, generated in accordance with characteristics of the predefined configuration **260** as identified by the request **225**, **230**, or **235**, or produced in any other fashion to accurately represent aspects of the request **225**, **230**, or **235** related to manipulation of the user-input elements **110**.

[0044] In addition to accessing or generating the configuration settings **250** and conveying them to electromechanical device **210**, the manipulation procedure executed by the processing unit **205** may include extracting presentation data **285** from the request **225** or **235**. The presentation data **285**, as more fully discussed above, is display-based information that is communicated to the flexible touchpad **115**. Accordingly, upon receipt of the presentation data **285**, the flexible touchpad **115** may render a UI display **120** that is partially controlled by the presentation data **285**. By way of example, the presentation data **285** may direct the flexible touchpad **115** to present alphanumeric characters at the UI display **120** in the pattern of a keyboard, dial pad, and the like. These alphanumeric characters may be displayed in association with outwardly-extending protrusions **125** expressed at the flexible touchpad **115**. Accordingly, the alphanumeric characters identify the function of each "key" that is generated by the outwardly-extending protrusions **125** (see FIGS. **5-7**). Further, the alphanumeric characters may assist a user in selecting appropriate areas of the flexible touchpad to actuate by visually indicating which user-input elements **110** are in an active condition. In an exemplary embodiment, the alphanumeric characters are rendered at the UI display **120** in a special format such that they are readable on a deformed surface of the flexible touchpad **115**, where the deformed surface is a result of the outwardly-extending protrusions **125**.

[0045] Generally, the electromechanical device **210** is configured to manipulate all, or a portion, of the user-input elements **110** to an extended orientation **116**, a retracted orientation, a partially extended orientation, and the like. Typically, the user-input elements **110** are adjusted in a manner consisted with instructions within the configuration settings **250**. Accordingly, the adjustment affects the outwardly-extending protrusions **125** expressed at the flexible touchpad **115**. In other embodiments, the electromechanical device **210** is adapted to enable or disable sensing devices coupled to the user-input elements **110**, thereby adjusting the user-input elements **110** between an active condition and an idle condition.

[0046] In a first embodiment, the electromechanical device **210** is an apparatus that employs extension components (e.g., compression springs, compressible materials, and the like) and retaining components (e.g., locking mechanisms, magnets) to manipulate the positional state of each of the user-input elements. In operation, the retaining components may release a portion of the user-input elements **110** such that the extension components are free to adjust the positional state of the portion to an extended orientation **116**. This portion of user-input elements **110** in the extended orientation **116** may